



**PREPARED STATEMENT OF
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2010 Census: Enumerating People Living in Group Quarters

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Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
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Chairman Towns, Chairman Clay, Ranking Member McHenry, members of the Committee, I appreciate this opportunity to once again testify before you about the 2010 Census.

First, the most important announcement I have to make to you today is that the 2010 Census is underway. Our work started on Monday, January 25, where we began an enumeration in Noorvik, an Alaska Native village in the Northwest Arctic Borough, 30 miles north of the Arctic Circle. That event, although costing nearly \$85,000, generated an audience of over 80 million people who were reminded that the 2010 Census is upon us. To reach that number of people through paid media would have cost at least \$10-\$15 million.

Also, our advertisements are on the air and in print. With our kickoff event in New York City on the Today Show and similar events around the country during the first week of January; we are well on our way to executing the largest non-military mobilization in the United States to count every resident in America.

In my last testimony, I noted a list of future activities and risks that needed to be addressed in late fall 2009. I can report that with less than 60 days away from Census Day, April 1, 2010, we have addressed many of these and we are ready to go. All 494 local census offices are open, staffed, with equipment in place, to serve the public. Recruiting for field operations is well ahead of our goals, even in hard-to-count areas. Just over 2.4 million potential hires have been recruited. We can boast over 200,000 partnerships formed around the country with organizations and communities ready to

help us raise awareness and increase participation rates. There are 9,600 Complete Count Committees, of which 6,800 are government-based, poised to work with us to raise awareness. We are on track or ahead of schedule with all of our forms printing: 210 million enumerator forms are printed; 44.5 million group quarters enumeration forms are printed; 97 percent of 169.5 million Mailout/Mailback, Update/Leave, and Replacement Mailing questionnaires are printed; 70 percent of 13.5 million bilingual questionnaires are printed; and, 79 percent of 132 million advanced letters are printed. Lastly, on February 1, 2010, we started the group quarters advance visits, the precursor to group quarters enumeration, where we work with group quarters administrators and devise the best method for counting their residents. Last week the first advance letters were mailed to about 10 million homes that will receive census forms hand-delivered by our staff.

Let me now turn to the chief focus of this hearing – the enumeration of so-called group quarters, the facilities that house many people, often unrelated to one another, in more or less permanent manner. A group quarters is a place where people live or stay that is normally owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the residents. The group quarters operations of the 2010 Census address the enumeration of places such as college dormitories, nursing homes, long-term care facilities, convents, monasteries, orphanages, boarding and rooming houses, jails, prisons, institutions for persons with mental or physical challenges, marinas and others.

The Concept of Usual Residence

It is important to understand one of the guiding principles the Census Bureau uses to help organize our work to count the population – the “usual residence rule”. The Census Bureau’s usual residence rule is grounded in the Census Act of 1790, which governed the very first Census.

“That every person whose usual place of abode shall be in any family on the aforesaid first Monday in August next, shall be returned as of such family; and the name of every person, who shall be an inhabitant of any district, but without a settled place of residence, shall be inserted in the column of the aforesaid schedule, which is allotted for the heads of families, in that division where he or she shall be on the said first Monday in August next, and every person occasionally absent at the time of the enumeration, as belonging to that place in which he usually resides in the United States. (emphasis added)”

It is assumed that “usual place of abode” (usual place of residence) contained in this first Census Act reflects the intention of the Founding Fathers, many of whom were in the First Congress.

The “concept of usual residence” remains intact today. The usual residence rule is intended to count people, once, and in the right place--that is the place where they generally eat, sleep, and work most of the time.

Now, how is this logic applied to those in group quarters?

Enumeration of Group Quarters

Below I explain the procedures involved in counting residents at some of the group quarter facilities we encounter most frequently.

Enumeration of Prisons

Persons living in prisons and jails are counted at these facilities, because this where they live and sleep most of the time.

The enumeration of correctional facilities focuses on the two major types of institutions:

- **Prisons**, which are generally state or federal facilities which incarcerate those convicted in criminal court and sentenced to terms of more than a year.
- **Jails**, which are generally local facilities used to incarcerate those pending adjudication, those convicted in criminal court for terms of a year or less, those held in contempt of court orders and in some cases juveniles awaiting hearings.

Ideally, the Bureau seeks to get an Individual Census Record, a one page census form into the hands of each prisoner for them to fill out. The practical and logistical constraints at each facility will dictate how the enumeration process proceeds. In instances where self-enumeration is not possible we will obtain the data through administrative records. The decision as to whether to use administrative records or self-enumeration procedures is determined facility-by-facility taking into consideration several factors:

Institutional Setting – A halfway house may pose a lighter administrative and logistical burden enabling self-enumeration, whereas an overcrowded state penitentiary may not lend itself to such enumeration procedures.

Security Level – A minimum security prison with a large work release population may not require the same degree of resources from the prison to ensure the safety of Bureau staff as a facility that houses maximum security offenders.

Administrative Preference – A prison administrator or warden may, after assessing the burden and calculating risk, determine the administrative records choice a more administratively sound approach.

Enumeration of College, University and Seminary Dormitories

The Census Bureau established residency rules to define where an individual is counted on Census Day. Federal Courts in the Borough of *Bethel Park v. Stans* upheld this application of the concept of “usual residence.” Accordingly, for the purposes of enumeration, college students fall into several categories:

- College students living away from their parental home while attending college are to be counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time (on campus or off campus) on April 1, 2010.
- Foreign students studying in the United States are counted at their household location or in college provided housing.
- United States students traveling or studying abroad are excluded from the Census.

The only students enumerated as part of the group quarters operation are students living in a dormitory, fraternity or sorority house, or any other housing arrangement provided by the college, university or seminary.

College students in apartments and other residential addresses other than group quarters will receive a census questionnaire in the mail like most households in the United States.

The enumeration process begins with a consultation with a college “point of contact” person at an agreed upon time to determine the most effective manner to distribute the questionnaire (Individual Census Report packets) to the students. A confidentiality notice is provided to the point of contact person along with documentation that the data the Census Bureau collects is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The completed Individual Census Report packets are collected and a census worker returns to pick up the census packets within a few days. The enumeration process includes resolving missing and incomplete data with the point of contact person. In addition, the census may conduct the enumeration of college students through administrative records provided by a university.

Enumeration of Health Care Facilities

Health care facilities are a major component of the group quarters operation, and are infused with complexity because of the wide variety of health care-related group quarters situations. This operation enumerates the inhabitants of long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes, and various forms of assisted and unassisted living facilities for senior citizens. These facilities may also include institutions that cater to people with mental illness, or long term physical disability. Group quarters operations also count inhabitants of hospitals that are in mental and psychiatric units, long term care units, hospice units and patients with no disposition or exit plan.

The Census Bureau allows hospitals to use a self-enumeration process. This means that the hospital staff conducts the enumeration. Ideally, Bureau enumerators would show up

at a facility, consult with the staff and develop a plan for the distribution of individual census reports to the residences. The completed Individual Census Report packets are collected and a census worker returns to pick up the census packets within a few days. Census Bureau workers will also accept administrative records from facility staff to use to complete individual census reports. If this cannot be done or is not preferable to the institution, the Census Bureau Crew Leader provides all the materials needed for the facility staff to conduct the enumeration. The Bureau ensures the facility staff are administered the oath to protect and maintain the confidentiality of the data collected. Census workers will train facility staff on how to perform the enumeration.

We allow self-enumeration for the following reasons:

- Operate under the need for extreme privacy.
- Need to protect standard routine activities against disruption.
- To mitigate potential safety issues for the visiting census staff as well as for the facility's residents.

The enumeration process begins with a consultation with the health care point-of-contact person at an agreed upon time to determine the most effective manner to enumerate their facility. A Confidentiality Notice is provided to the point of contact person along with documentation that the data the Census Bureau collects is in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The enumeration process includes resolving missing and incomplete data with the point-of-contact person.

Release of Summary File

The Census Bureau recently decided to provide an early release of 2010 Census counts of residents of group quarters in May 2011. .

We will supply the block-level counts as defined by Public Law No. 94-171, used in redistricting activities in the states by the end March, 2011. We learned in discussions over the past few months with external stakeholders that providing a related tabulation might be useful to them. We also learned that the tabulation would be helpful to our partners in local and state governments, and in our own Count Question Resolution Program, which looks for anomalies in the census counts at low levels of geography.

To serve these needs the Census Bureau is preparing to release a planned table from our Summary File 1 product plan, the P-41 table, a few months earlier than the release of the entire Summary File 1 product, which is scheduled for release June through August 2011. This single table is not a special tabulation or a preliminary table—but an early release of a planned table to facilitate potential uses to a host of data users.

This table will include the total universe of group quarters, which includes two major categories – institutionalized and non-institutionalized populations. Within the institutionalized category are correctional facilities, juvenile facilities nursing/skilled nursing facilities and other institutional facilities. Within the non-institutionalized category are college/university student housing such as dormitories, military quarters and other non-institutional facilities.

These counts will be provided by state, county, census tract and each census tabulation block. This table will include a total population count for major group quarters types only. It will not include any characteristics such as age, sex or race. We are committing that we can produce this table on an accelerated schedule releasing it by File Transfer Protocol (FTP) only in May of 2011. We understand that most, if not all, users who apply our statistics for redistricting purposes are well served by the FTP medium. Additionally, the provision of this table via FTP provides us with the ability to release this table a little sooner than planned.

What this table provides is a tool for those public officials charged with the responsibility of redistricting their state legislative boundaries the opportunity to assess the significance of group quarters populations in their plans. This table does not remove prisoner populations from their respective census tabulation blocks. This table will not remove group quarters populations from the 2010 census totals. There should be no impact on the distribution of federal, state or local funds based upon the early release of this table. This release is consistent with providing the states with the tools they need to conduct their legislative redistricting.

Conclusion

I want to close by reaffirming the Census Bureau's commitment to an accurate count in the 2010 Census. In addition, the Census Bureau remains steadfast in its pledge to work closely with the data user community, namely the state and local governments who rely on the accuracy of the census. I hope that I have successfully explained how the Census Bureau gathers group quarters data as well as the operational plans regarding the group quarters validation, advance visits, and enumeration. In short, you have the Census Bureau's commitment to conducting a thorough enumeration that includes interviews, facility representatives to distribute questionnaire packets to each resident, and the use of administrative records.

I would like to stress that the Census Bureau does not participate in any redistricting activities. Our job is a completely nonpartisan, objective enumeration of the population. Simply put, the Census Bureau collects individual information and reports aggregates based on it. Fittingly, the Founding Fathers left it to the federal, state, and local governments to use the information for their political purposes. In that vein, the Census Bureau endeavors to compile the group quarters information in the Summary File for its key data users at the state and local level. How those levels of governments choose to use the data is squarely within their realm of authority.

I believe the 2010 Census is on track to being a success. We have asked that every political, corporate, community and religious leader get the message out that the cost and quality of the 2010 Census is in our hands. I look forward to working with you in the coming months to let you know how we are doing and how we have done.

I thank the Subcommittee for this opportunity and would be happy to answer your questions.

